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Our Founding Fathers created a representative democracy so the voices of people would be represented in our government. This is what allows Americans to be active in directing the future of our country. That includes letting your elected officials know how you feel about different topics. I appreciate the calls, letters and emails that let me know what you think about the issues under discussion in Washington. Among the ideas in the past year are those offering ways to balance the federal books and put our nation on a path to fiscal prosperity.

Every day, Arkansas families are forced to live within their means and Washington needs to follow their example. We borrow more than 40 cents of every dollar the federal government spends. This is unsustainable. We need to prioritize how we spend taxpayer dollars and that must begin with creating a budget and drafting appropriations legislation.

If you think we should be spending more money on national defense and less money on foreign affairs, appropriations bills are the right place to put that money in or take those funds out. Instead of following proper procedure we have been forced to pass massive spending bills with little time to discuss how taxpayer dollars are being spent so that we can avoid interruptions in government services. This is not what the American people deserve.

Earlier this year Majority Leader Harry Reid said the Senate would take steps to follow regular order and approve appropriations bills. I joined my colleagues on both sides of the aisle [supporting this announcement](#). Unfortunately, Leader Reid recently put a stop to that work. I [expressed my disappointment with that decision on the Senate floor](#).



[-Watch the speech here-](#)

I believe that in order to cut spending and allow for greater transparency, we need to follow proper appropriations procedure. This is the very reason why I am a cosponsor of a commonsense approach to [help fix our budget process](#) and provide certainty for Americans relying on government agencies for help.

Quick Takes:

Wrong Approach to Immigration Reform: The Administration recently announced sweeping changes to our nation's immigration policy. I have [concerns about the policy](#) and the way the Administration went about making this major modification.

Infrastructure Investments: Building and maintaining a strong transportation infrastructure is vital to the economic progress of Arkansas. Congress recently [approved a two-year highway bill](#) that will provide Arkansas with federal funds to improve its infrastructure. In addition, the [West Memphis Port](#) and the [Batesville Airport](#) were also awarded grants to help increase economic opportunities.

Remembering Arkansas Soldiers: We need to be aware of the sacrifices of American troops and their families. Arkansans [MSG Gregory Childs](#) and [SGT Michael Strachota](#) gave their lives serving in our military and fighting for our freedoms. I recognized their ultimate sacrifice on the Senate floor.

Fighting Tax Increases: Washington needs to focus on economic growth and job creation. We should be doing everything we can to encourage manufacturing and investment within the United States. Reforming the tax code is a good place to start. That's why I [introduced legislation to eliminate the death tax](#). This unnecessary tax

burdens America's family farms and businesses following the death of a loved one.

Protecting National Security: I joined my Senate colleagues in asking for an [independent counsel to investigate possible leaks](#) out of the White House. There have been several blatant security breaches and we need to hold whomever is responsible for these leaks accountable.

Media Round-up: If you missed my latest interviews on KASU in Jonesboro or KBJT in Fordyce you can listen to them in their entirety by following [this link](#). We also joined The City Wire for an interview recently from our Washington office. You can [watch that here](#).

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